

Some of our older property owners may now be eligible for an exemption on their tax bill, thanks to the vote for Article 29 at this year's town meeting.

Explanation: The FY2008 reduction in real estate tax for qualifying seniors under this program was \$822.72 and this amount increases annually by a cost of living adjustment averaging 3.5% (maximum exemption: \$1,000.00). The Town is reimbursed by the state for \$500.00 of each Ch.41C exemption granted. Conway last adjusted the qualifying limits for this program several years ago, and there have been public requests to revisit this question and see if the Town will choose to change the qualifying limits.

Town Meeting voted to expand the qualifying circumstances for a 41C exemption as follows:

A – the FY2008 qualifying limit for gross receipts (2006 income from *all sources* minus \$3,841 of social security if single and \$5,762 if married), was \$18,000 if single, \$25,000 if married. If a single person's qualifying income exceeded \$18,000 per year (reflecting an average monthly income of \$1,500), this single person did not qualify for exemption. A married couple was limited to an average of \$2,083.33 per month total income (\$25,000 per year) to qualify for exemption.

This qualifying income limit is now increased to a maximum of \$20,000 in the previous calendar year if single and \$30,000 if married.

B – the prior qualifying limit for whole estate (including bank accounts, CDs, investments, etc.), less the value of the home property, was \$35,000 if single and \$50,000 if married. If a single person had any more than \$35,000 invested (or \$50,000 for a married couple), they would not previously qualify for exemption, *even if* their annual return on that investment was below the qualifying income limits.

This limit for whole estate less the value of the home property is now increased to a maximum of \$40,000 if single and \$55,000 if married.

C – present qualifying age limit was 70 years as of July 1 before the October bill.

The qualifying age has been reduced to 65 years as of July 1 before the October bill.

These new limits go into effect for the Fall 2008 bills.

Notes: an exemption is on the tax billed, not on the assessment, and you must fill out and file an application with the Assessors within 3 months of when the fall bill goes out. We mail out forms to those who have received an exemption in the past, or you can download one from the town web site, phone the office (369-4235, x5) and we will mail one to you, or stop by the office to pick up an application.

The exemption is on the person applying, not on the house, so only one owner needs to qualify, but only one exemption can be issued per property.

You must meet all three categories to qualify for an exemption.